



Sparks

**Grand Rapids Y Service Club
Y Service clubs International
Mid East Region
March 30, 2012**

OUR MISSION

As Y's Men International is a world-wide fellowship of persons of all faiths working constructively together based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, in partnership with and supporting the YMCA, its mission is to strive through active service to develop, encourage and provide leadership to build a better world for all humankind.

CLUB OFFICERS

Pres: John Duiven
Secretary: Neil Topliffe
Treasurer: Bob Smith
Asst. Treas: Tom Johnson
Chaplin: Neil Topliffe

BOARD MEMBERS

Mark Radtke
John Carruthers
Ethan Ray
Dan Miller
Alex Kassel
John Lang
Past Pres: Henry Capogna
Pres. Elect: Pete Chadwick

ACTIVITY CHAIRS

Run Thru the Rapids:
Syd Baxter & Kent Mudie
Santa Claus Girls:
Bob Smith
White Elephant Sale:
Gregory Winer, Chair
Sparks Editor:
Lloyd E. Winer

Welcome by *John Duiven*, invocation by *Neil Topliffe*, Pledge of Allegiance.

Introduction of guests: *Dick Howard, Ted Kusmierz, Al Juarez, Rosalie George* (wife of *Al George*), *Sandy Topliffe* (wife of *Neil Topliffe*), *Jessica Huizen, Dave Wiehe, Mark Hesselschmidt*.

Several Grateful dollars

Club business:

WES update: *Greg Winer* – Keep the calls going. Things are going well. Work days Saturday mornings. Greg has volunteered to repeat again next year as WES chairman. We would like someone to volunteer to assist him, learn the job and be Chairman for 2014.

PROGRAM: Carlos Hidalgo introduced by Henry Capogna

Carlos Hidalgo introduced himself as one of the thousands of Peter Pan Kids age 9 to 15 that left Cuba in 1960. Parents were sending their children to other parts of the world with the risk of never seeing them again rather than raising them in a communist country. They wanted their children to grow up in freedom. He was 15 when his father took him to the Havana airport, neither knowing what to say to the other. It has left him passionate about the United States that welcomed him and gave him a home and a future, and passionate about Cuba.

He described Cuba before 1958. It began in 1501 with a university in 1510. It has some of the oldest buildings in the Western Hemisphere. In 1957 the health care, literacy rate, number of schools, newspapers and TV stations was among the highest in the world. Average individual industrial salaries were 16th in the world and agricultural salaries 14th. Most of the major companies of the United States did business in Cuba.

Within 18 months after Castro came to power in 1958 all foreign companies had been taken over by the Cuban government. Six months later all personal private ownership had been take over by the government.

A video was shown of Cuba in 1958 with Hidalgo pointing out the well dressed people and cars actively moving through the streets of Havana, the beautiful buildings and neighborhoods. After the video he closed with a

description of the end of the movie, "Gone with the Wind." The beautiful city was in ruins, and so is Havana and Cuba.

FUTURE DATES

Our April 13 meeting will feature the Endowment Q&A discussion. **Sara DeMann** and **Ron Nelson** will be present to assist in answering questions. A copy of the document (Q&A) will be emailed to all members on Friday April. That will give everyone a chance to familiarize themselves with the facts before we meet. We will have a show of hands to give direction to the Board.

Next Board meeting is April 18 at **Pete Chadwick's** office.

The WES is April 27 and 28

Next regular meeting is Friday May 11

On May 25 our very own **Don Kern** will fill us in on the details of his recent Marathon record.

Closing Benediction - Bob **Williams**

Minutes by Gary **Davis**

It is time to keep thinking about possible WES donors, see if you can't think of more people or businesses that will make a donation or cash gift. Also seek out gift cards from businesses.

**Let's make the best WES ever!
Contact your donors and look for more sources
of items or gift cards or cash for the sale.**

Did you know?

Y's Club in Latin America-Caribbean area has 44 Club's in 12 countries and 633 members. Brazil is the largest Area.

Thought for the day:

Small deeds done are better than great deeds planned.

Peter Marshall

SPARKS

If you have anything I can put in the Sparks email me the lwiner@sbcglobal.net

I will be happy to include the information